

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 STR-08 AGR-20 OMB-01

TRSE-00 AID-20 TAR-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 DRC-01 L-03 H-03 /124 W

----- 014095

R 191800Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6532

INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1076

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, CS, HO, INV

SUBJECT: BANANAS

REF: STATE 053281

STATE 054282

1. PRESIDENT FIGUERES TOLD CHARGE YESTERDAY, MARCH 18, THAT HE IS EXPECTING KIRCHHOFF LATER THIS WEEK AND HE IS CONFIDENT THAT STANDARD FRUIT WILL AGREE TO NEW EXPORT TAX. FIGUERES' VIEW IS THAT CENTRAL AMERICAN BANANAS ARE

A GOOD BUSINESS FOR STANDARD AND THEY WONT JEOPARDIZE IT.

2. FIGUERES ADMITTED THAT HE BLEW UP IN MEETING IN TEGUCIGALPA BUT FORTUNATELY ONLY WITHIN THE "FAMILY" OF OTHER
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CENTRAL AMERICANS. MARIO ESQUIVEL, ON THE OTHER HAND, MADE

INTEMPERATE REMARKS DIRECTLY TO WAITE WHICH FIGUERES APPARENTLY REGRETS.

3. THE PRESIDENT EMPHASIZED THAT STANDARD IS NOT BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, I.E., THAT ALL INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES WILL BE AFFECTED BY EXPORT TAX EQUALLY WITH DOMESTIC PRODUCERS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO CHARGE'S QUESTION, FIGUERES SAID ECUADOR IS DEFINITELY ON BOARD FOR EXPORT TAX, AND INDICATED FINAL AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING ASSOCIATION OF PRODUCING

COUNTRIES WILL BE SIGNED IN GUAYAQUIL SOON. HE ADDED THAT EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO NARROW THE TAX DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN ECUADOR AND OTHER COUNTRIES, WHICH GENERAL SOMOZA REPORTEDLY BELIEVES GIVES ECUADOR UNFAIR ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER WEST COAST PRODUCERS.

5. MINISTER OF ECONOMY KOGAN AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE BATALLA DEPARTED LAST NIGHT TO JOIN CA DELEGATION FOR FINAL DISCUSSIONS IN ECUADOR. THEY MAY ALSO VISIT BOGOTA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CUSTOMS DUTIES, FRUIT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANJO001076
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740057-1124
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740332/aaaabdyw.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 053281
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <06 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BANANAS
TAGS: ETRD, CS, HO, XK, STANDARD FRUIT COMPANY
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005